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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5703
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS ZAGREB 000198

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SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [SCUL](#) [UNESCO](#) [HR](#)

SUBJECT: CROATIA AND UNESCO CONVENTION ON CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

REF: SECSTATE 19851

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

¶1. (SBU) Croatia has not yet ratified the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Expressions. The GOC has made no public statements in support of the Convention or its eventual ratification since its adoption last October. Ratification is not currently on the parliamentary agenda and our contacts assess that there is little likelihood that it will be tabled in the near term.

¶2. (SBU) Media attention has likewise been scant following the Convention's adoption. The few press stories focused less on the specifics of the convention itself than on the fact that the U.S. opposed it, with one paper proclaiming "Croatia Says No to the U.S. for the Fourth Time." There has been no further mention of the Convention since November.

¶3. (SBU) There has been no public debate about the Convention since its adoption and general interest is minimal. However, public perceptions of UNESCO are extremely positive in Croatia, which would likely extend to this Convention, were it more widely discussed. Croatia's difficult history and relatively small size combine to produce an acute sense of cultural and linguistic vulnerability.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: The GOC supported the Convention's adoption and is not concerned that it will be misused to protectionist ends. Should the Convention be tabled for approval in the parliament, we assess that it would pass by a wide margin. End Comment.

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